



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Rodger A. Heaton
Central District of Illinois

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Decatur Man and Woman Charged with Selling Stolen Goods on Ebay

SPRINGFIELD, IL - A Decatur man and woman were indicted today with selling stolen property on eBay, as announced by Rodger A. Heaton, United States Attorney for the Central District of Illinois. Ryan Blankenship, age 33, and Tonya Ashby, 21, both of Decatur, Illinois, were each charged with a single count of wire fraud.

The indictment alleges that Blankenship, Ashby, and others, defrauded buyers on eBay from October 2005, or before, through May 2006, or later. The defendants allegedly stole property from various retail merchants, including Lowe's, Target, and Best Buy, and Carle Hospital in Urbana, Illinois. The stolen goods were allegedly sold through the eBay account, "Minnesota Surplus," for a fraction of their retail value. According to the indictment, the two defendants aided another in control of a PayPal account through which more than \$100,000 in monies from the sale of stolen property were transferred.

The charges are the result of an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Decatur Police Department. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Colin S. Bruce.

If convicted, the statutory penalty for wire fraud is up to 20 years imprisonment. A summons will be issued for each of the defendants to appear in federal court in Urbana, Illinois.

Members of the public are reminded that an indictment is merely an accusation; the defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

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